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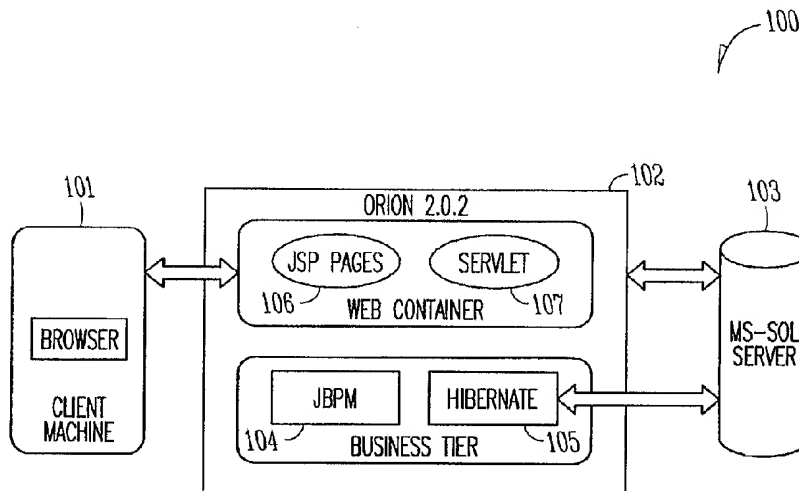
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ANNUITY PROCESSING



(57) Abstract: The present invention provides a system, apparatus, and method for annuity processing. In some embodiments, an annuity processing module is used in conjunction with an internet-based patent- and trademark-application management system. This annuity-processing module reflects a software implementation of various business rules or methods associated with paying the annuity due on a patent. These rules are, in some embodiments, derived from various laws relating to the payment of annuities. In some embodiments, these rules are provided to a workflow engine via a DTD or XML schema. The workflow engine manages the execution of the various business rules and states associated with this execution. These rules, including the decision to make a payment, can be manually executed or automatically executed by a member of an organization implementing the annuity payment module as a part of a larger system. This larger application could, in some embodiments, be an internet-based patent- and trademark-application management system.

WO 2007/120649 A3



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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - G06Q 40/00 (2007.01)

USPC - 705/40

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
705/40Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
705/1, 35, 36R 700/1, 90Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
WEST(USPAT, US PUB, EPO, JPO, DERWENT) DialogPRO(Engineering); Google - workflow, verify, instructions, data, management system, payment, annuity

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2002/0161733 A1 (Grainger) 31 October 2002 (31.10.2002), entire document, especially para [0032]-[0131]	1-20
A	US 2005/0210009 A1 (Tran) 22 September 2005 (22.09.2005), entire document.	1-20

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